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U.S. Office of Education

Restoring the handicapped to useful employment

Washington

[1940]

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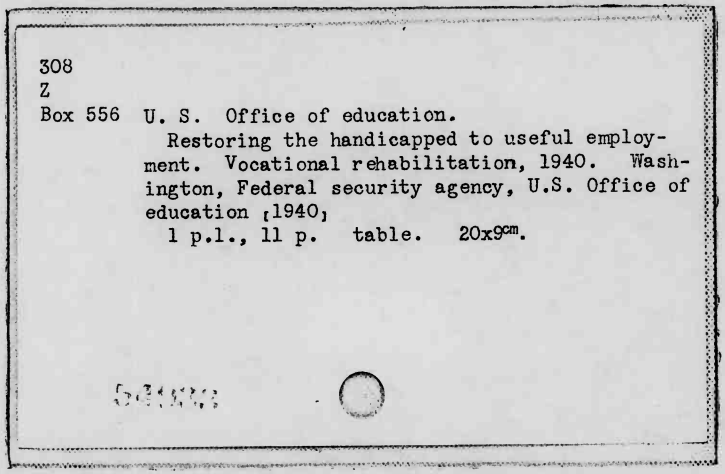

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Restoring The Handicapped To Useful Employment

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

1940

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Federal Security Agency
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Restoring the Handicapped To Useful Employment

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The Problem of Disablement

Approximately 4,000,000 persons in the United States are handicapped to some degree by permanent physical disabilities. Recent house-to-house canvasses, made in several States, indicate that approximately 3 percent of the general population have some sort of serious permanent physical disability.

There are continuous additions to the large group whose employment opportunities are lessened by physical disabilities. Each year nearly 400,000 persons are permanently disabled to some extent by accidents. Thousands more are handicapped as a result of tuberculosis, heart disease, defective vision or hearing, arthritis, and other diseases. From the standpoint of rehabilitation, the physically disabled may be divided into two major groups: (*a*) The adult workers and (*b*) young workers entering the occupational world. For the first group the problem is that of readjustment to their former occupations or retraining for new and more suitable occupations; for the young workers the problem is that of special training to enable them to compete with normal individuals in their search for employment.

The Results of Disablement

Physical disability is an important cause of unemployment, and thus a contributing factor in the social and personal disintegration that accompanies unemployment. Although most

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physically handicapped persons find employment in spite of their disabilities, thousands are unable to make satisfactory adjustments. In 1934, a canvass of 165,000 relief families revealed that 18 percent of the 450,000 persons enumerated reported serious physical disabilities.

Prevention and Remedy

In order to cope with the disastrous effects of disabling accidents and disease, society has devised various expedient and preventive measures. The maintenance of safe working conditions and education of workers in safety practices prevent and reduce the costs of accidents. Training of persons in health habits and in control of communicable disease makes life safer and reduces the number of victims of disease.

The State and Federal Governments have enacted legislation providing for the payment of compensation benefits to persons suffering from work accidents. Hospitals and clinics are maintained to provide medical and surgical care for the sick and injured. The social Security Act authorized or extended several programs which promote the welfare of physically handicapped persons: Aid to the needy blind, crippled children's services, and vocational rehabilitation.

The National Program of Vocational Rehabilitation

In order to assist physically handicapped persons to maintain themselves in employment, the Federal and State Governments are engaged in a service of vocational rehabilitation. The national program of vocational rehabilitation was begun in 1920 under an act of Congress, approved June 2, 1920. The program was expanded and made permanent by the provisions of the Social Security Act, approved

August 14, 1935. Further expansion of the program resulted from the amendments to the Social Security Act, approved August 10, 1939.

All 48 States, the District of Columbia, and the Territories of Hawaii and Puerto Rico are now engaged in the work. More than 40,000 persons are listed on the active rolls of the State departments, and more than 11,000 are being rehabilitated annually.

Aims and Methods in Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational rehabilitation service is designed to restore to remunerative employment and self-support persons who have lost their earning capacity through permanent physical disability. It is accomplished by providing for the individual, one or more of the following services:

1. Vocational guidance in the selection of a suitable type of employment.

2. Physical restoration, that is, surgical or medical treatment when the disability can be reduced or removed, or provision of an artificial appliance to restore the impaired function.

3. Vocational training in the occupation at which it has been determined the person can work despite his handicap.

4. Assistance in securing employment in the occupation for which the person has been fitted.

In order to determine what services are required for the vocational rehabilitation of a particular individual, a thorough diagnosis is made of his physical, mental, social, and economic condition, as well as of the training and employment opportunities in his community. After these factors are studied, arrangements are made for the person to be given the services he needs.

State rehabilitation departments do not maintain schools, workshops, institutions, and other facilities. All necessary services are secured through purchase or cooperative arrangement

with existing public and private schools, commercial and industrial establishments, hospitals, social organizations, and any other agencies in a position to assist.

In the rehabilitation program disabled persons are prepared for a great variety of occupations ranging from unskilled to technical or professional employment. Training is given in public or private trade schools, colleges, commercial and industrial establishments, and by tutor or correspondence.

State and Local Responsibility

Under the Federal and State rehabilitation acts, the States have the responsibility of rehabilitating disabled persons living within their own jurisdictions. The program is administered by the State board for vocational education, whose headquarters' office is usually located at the State capitol. A number of the States maintain district offices, and many of them have, in addition, cooperative relationships with local agencies.

The chief functions of a State rehabilitation department are to maintain a case referral system whereby disabled persons may be located, and a staff of specialists to give advice and guidance to such disabled persons; to arrange needed services for these individuals; and to supervise the services rendered. Rehabilitation staffs also make placements or supervise the placement of their clients.

Eligibility for Rehabilitation Service

In general any person of employable age who is vocationally handicapped because of a permanent physical disability is eligible for the service. Naturally such factors as citizenship, moral character, and degree of disability are taken into consideration. Each State in establishing its program has the responsibility of setting up its own rules and regulations governing eligibility, in conformity with the general provisions of the Federal act.

Not all persons who are eligible for service can be rehabilitated. It is recognized as a result of experience that such factors as age, extent of physical disability, attitude of mind, and environment may make it inadvisable or uneconomic to render a rehabilitation service or impossible to accomplish it. When a disabled person has passed the normal working age his training is not likely feasible. Often persons with extreme disabilities are not capable of rehabilitation, and occasionally certain types of mentality or temperament are incompatible with successful employment.

Function of the Federal Government

Under the Federal rehabilitation act it is the responsibility of the Federal Government to promote the rehabilitation program, give financial aid to the States, audit the expenditure of Federal and State matching funds, and to carry on such research and investigational work as will promote the work generally.

The Federal agency for carrying on this work is the United States Office of Education, in the Federal Security Agency.

Permissible Expenditures

Under the policies of the United States Office of Education as based upon provisions in the Federal act, Federal and State matching funds may be expended for the following purposes:

Salaries of staff and clerical assistants.
Travel of staff.
Administration—communication, printing, supplies.
Rent, light, and heat.
Tuition and instructional supplies and equipment for trainees.
Travel of trainees.
Artificial appliances.
Physical examinations.
Maintenance of trainees.

The following table shows the allotments of Federal funds to the States authorized under the Social Security Act. These allotments are determined on the basis of the ratio of the population of a State to the population of the entire country. Provision is also made for a minimum allotment of $20,000 per annum.

There is a provision in the Federal rehabilitation act that such Federal funds as are not used in any fiscal year by a State may be reallotted to other States which are prepared to use the additional funds.

Table of allotments of Federal funds to the States

Country	[1] $3, 530, 000. 00
Alabama	72, 297. 81
Arizona	20, 000. 00
Arkansas	50, 666. 07
California	155, 107. 45
Colorado	28, 298. 71
Connecticut	43, 901. 99
Delaware	20, 000. 00
Florida	40, 112. 81
Georgia	79, 462. 92
Idaho	20, 000. 00
Illinois	208, 476. 13
Indiana	88, 478. 73
Iowa	67, 508. 21
Kansas	51, 390. 54
Kentucky	71, 432. 85
Louisiana	57, 417. 36
Maine	21, 786. 29
Maryland	44, 574. 72
Massachusetts	116, 103. 16
Michigan	132, 296. 55
Minnesota	70, 049. 43
Mississippi	54, 910. 06
Missouri	99, 157. 47
Montana	20, 000. 00
Nebraska	37, 647. 15
Nevada	20, 000. 00
New Hampshire	20, 000. 00
New Jersey	110, 412. 77

[1] Includes authorization of $3,500,000 under Social Security Act, and special authorizations of $25,000 to District of Columbia and $5,000 to Hawaii.

Table of allotments of Federal funds to the States — Continued

New Mexico	$20, 000. 00
New York	343, 916. 95
North Carolina	86, 614. 71
North Dakota	20, 000. 00
Ohio	181, 593. 56
Oklahoma	65, 461. 90
Oregon	26, 058. 27
Pennsylvania	263, 136. 89
Rhode Island	20, 000. 00
South Carolina	47, 504. 58
South Dakota	20, 000. 00
Tennessee	71, 486. 59
Texas	159, 136. 30
Utah	20, 000. 00
Vermont	20, 000. 00
Virginia	66, 167. 08
Washington	42, 713. 34
West Virginia	47, 243. 39
Wisconsin	80, 296. 21
Wyoming	20, 000. 00
District of Columbia	25, 000. 00
Hawaii	20, 000. 00
Puerto Rico	42, 181. 05

Conditions for Securing Federal Allotments

To secure Federal funds a State must, through its legislative authority—

1. Accept the provisions of the National Vocational Rehabilitation Act.

2. Empower and direct its State board for vocational education to conduct the vocational rehabilitation service.

3. Provide a plan of cooperation between the State board and the State compensation commission, or agency, the plan to become effective when approved by the Governor of the State.

4. Provide for supervision and support of the vocational rehabilitation service.

5. Appoint the State treasurer custodian of Federal vocational rehabilitation funds.

Further Information

If further information is desired concerning the national program of vocational rehabilita-

tion of the physically disabled, it may be secured from the United States Office of Education, Vocational Rehabilitation Division, Washington, D. C.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

The organic National Rehabilitation Act was approved June 2, 1920. It has been amended three times for the purpose of extending its provisions. One section of the Social Security Act (title V, part 4) approved in 1935, served further to amend the original act. This amendment made the program a permanent service and increased the authorization for appropriation from $1,000,000 to $1,938,000. A further amendment to the Social Security Act, approved August 10, 1939, increased the authorization from $1,938,000 to $3,500,000.

Digests of the Federal acts are given below.

NATIONAL VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION ACT

AN ACT to provide for the promotion of vocational rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or otherwise and their return to civil employment.

SECTION 1. That in order to provide for the promotion of vocational rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or otherwise and their placement in employment, there is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the use of the States, . . . for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1934, the sum of $1,000,000; . . . 1935, . . . $1,000,000; . . . 1936, . . . $1,000,000; and . . . 1937, . . . $1,000,000. Said sums shall be allotted to the States in the proportion which their populations bear to the total population in the United States, not including Territories, outlying possessions, and the District of Columbia, . . . *Provided*, That the allotments of funds to any State shall not be less than a minimum of $10,000 for any fiscal year: *Provided, further*, That such portions of the sums allotted that will not be used in any fiscal year may be allotted in that year proportionately to the States which are prepared through available State funds to use the additional Federal funds. And there is hereby authorized to be appropriated for each of the fiscal years ending June 30, 1934, June 30, 1935, June 30, 1936, and June 30, 1937, the sum of

$97,000 . . . for the purpose of providing the minimum allotments to the States . . .

All money expended . . . from appropriations . . . shall be upon the condition (1) that for each dollar of Federal money expended there shall be expended in the State . . . at least an equal amount for the same purpose: *Provided*, That no portion of the appropriations . . . shall be used by any institution for handicapped persons except for vocational rehabilitation of such individuals entitled to the benefits of this Act as shall be determined by the Federal Board; (2) that the State board shall annually submit . . . plans showing (*a*) the plan of administration and supervision of the work; (*b*) the qualifications of directors, supervisors, and other employees; and (*c*) the policies and methods of carrying on the work; (3) that the State board shall make an annual report . . . (4) that no portion of any money . . . shall be applied, directly or indirectly, to the purchase, preservation, erection, or repair of any building . . . or equipment, or for the purchase or rental of any lands; (5) that all vocational rehabilitation service given . . . shall be available, . . . to any civil employee of the United States . . .

SECTION 2. . . . the term "persons disabled" shall be construed to mean any person who, by reason of a physical defect or infirmity, whether congenital or acquired by accident, injury, or disease, is, or may be expected to be, totally or partially incapacitated for remunerative occupation; the term "rehabilitation" shall be construed to mean the rendering of a person disabled fit to engage in a remunerative occupation.

SECTION 3. That in order to secure the benefits of the appropriations . . . any State shall, through the legislative authority thereof, (1) accept the provisions of this act; (2) empower and direct the Board designated . . . as the State board for vocational education . . . to cooperate . . . with the Federal Board for Vocational Education in the administration . . . of this act; (3) in those States where a State workmen's compensation board, or other State board, . . . exists, charged with the administration of the State workmen's compensation or liability laws, the legislature shall provide that a plan of cooperation be formulated between such State board, . . . and the State board charged with the administration of this act, . . .; (4) provide for the supervision and support of the program . . .; (5) appoint as custodian for said appropriations its State treasurer, . . .

SECTION 4. That the Federal Board for Vocational Education . . . is hereby authorized to make . . . such rules . . . as may be necessary . . . to provide for the vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons and their placement in employment; and to cooperate, . . . with such public and private agencies as it may deem advisable. It shall be the duty of said Board (1) to examine plans submitted by the State boards and approve the same . . .; (2) to ascertain annually whether the several States are using or are prepared to use the money received by them in accordance with . . . this act; (3) to certify . . . to the Secretary of the Treasury each State which has accepted the provisions . . . with the amount which each State is entitled to receive . . .; (4) to deduct from the next succeeding allotment . . . any portion . . . not . . . expended for the purpose provided for in this act . . .; (5) to withhold the allotment . . . not . . . expended for the purposes and conditions of this act; and (6) to require the replacement . . . of any portion of the moneys . . . diminished or lost; *Provided*, That if any allotment is withheld . . . such State may appeal to the Congress of the United States; . . .

SECTION 5. (Provides for payments to States and the making of reports.)

SECTION 6. That there is hereby authorized to be appropriated to the Federal Board of Vocational Education the sum of $80,000 annually for . . . four years, commencing July 1, 1933, for the purpose of making studies, investigations, and reports regarding the vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons and their placements in suitable or gainful occupations, and for the administrative expenses of said Board incident to performing the duties imposed by this act, . . .

SECTION 7. (Provides for acceptance of gifts.)

Approved: June 2, 1920, June 5, 1924, June 9, 1930, June 30, 1932.

SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

Title V, Part 4—Vocational Rehabilitation

SECTION 531. (*a*) In order to enable the United States to cooperate with the States and Hawaii in extending and strengthening their programs of vocational rehabilitation . . . and . . . to carry out the provisions . . . of the act entitled "An act to provide for the promotion of vocational rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or otherwise and their return to civil employment," approved June 2, 1920, as amended (U. S. C., title 29, ch. 4; U. S. C., Supp. VII, title 29, secs. 31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39, and 40), there is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1936, and June 30, 1937, the sum of $841,000 for each such fiscal year in addition to the amount of the existing authorization, and for each fiscal year thereafter the sum of $3,500,000. Of the sums appropriated . . . $15,000 shall be apportioned to the Territory of Hawaii and the remainder . . . apportioned . . . in the manner provided in such act of June 2, 1920, as amended: *Provided*, That the amount . . . apportioned to any State for any fiscal year shall be not less than $20,000.

(*b*) For the administration of such act of June 2, 1920, as amended, by the . . . (Office of Education), there is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1936, and June 30, 1937, the sum of $22,000 for each such fiscal year in addition to the amount of the existing authorization, and for each fiscal year thereafter the sum of $150,000.

Title XI—General Provisions—Definitions

SECTION 1101. (*a*) Effective January 1, 1940, when used in this act—

(1) The term "State" . . . includes Puerto Rico.

Approved August 14, 1935.

Approved August 10, 1939.

END OF
TITLE